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ABSTRACT

Analysis of the interaction of the grammatical and copulative aspects of the Spanish verbs "era," "estaba," "fue," and "estuvo" revealed that for most of the data obtained, copulative and grammatical aspect operate independently, with syntactic-semantic constraints selecting one copula and grammatical aspect applying to the copula as to any other verb. For data where all four copulative forms contrast, "era" is found to be -beginning defined and -end defined, "estaba" is +beginning and -end defined, "fue" is -beginning and +end defined, and "estuvo" is +beginning and +end defined. (Author/MSE)

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Aspect in *era*, *estaba*, *fue*, and *estuvo*

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ABSTRACT

current title: Aspect in era, estaba, fue, and estuvo

former title: If the Spanish Copulas are Aspectual, What about era, estaba, fue, and estuvo?

Previous research has established that the Spanish copulas ser and estar are imperfective and perfective respectively. Since imperfective and perfective aspect are also marked in all verbs in the past tense, the logical next step is to see how this grammatical aspect interacts with copulative aspect. Is era (ser, +past, +imperfect) 'doubly' imperfect and estaba (estar, +past, +imperfect) 'simultaneously' imperfective and perfective? My analysis replaces such riddles with the following two findings: (1) For most of the data, copulative and grammatical aspect operate independently. Syntactic-semantic constraints select one copula, and then grammatical aspect applies to the copula as to any other verb. For data where all four copulative forms contrast, era is -beginning defined and -end defined; estaba is +beginning and -end defined; fue is - beginning and +end defined; and estuvo is +beginning and +end defined.

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Introduction

The final sentence of Luján's 1979[91] paper on the aspectual values of ser and estar in Spanish defines the linguistic problem tackled in this paper: 'What needs to be further investigated is the exact nature of the combinations of perfective and imperfective grammatical aspect with perfective and imperfective types of predicates.' (p.~~48~~[204]) In other words, having claimed that the copula ser has imperfective aspectual value and estar perfective value, the next order of business is to determine how this copulative aspect interacts with grammatical aspect. The latter is customarily applied to the distinction in past tense verbs as represented by Perfective habló 'he spoke' and Imperfective hablaba 'he was speaking'.

In a previous paper, where I support Luján's conclusions with further arguments (Bookman, 1982), I tentatively promised to examine how copulative and grammatical aspect interact. 'Is fue marked once for imperfectivity since it is a form of ser and then marked once for perfectivity since it is the Perfective form as opposed to the Imperfective era?' (p. 415)[1] And is era marked twice for imperfectivity since it is both a form of ser and cast in the Imperfective verb form? The following chart spells out this supposed four-way contrast:

Chart 1

Copula	Aspectual Features
era	-perfective (grammatical)
	-perfective (copulative)
estaba	-perfective
	+perfective
fue	+perfective
	-perfective
estuvo	+perfective
	+perfective

In this chart, each of the four forms receives two aspectual features. The grammatical form assigns one feature (era versus fue and estaba versus estuvo) and the copula assigns the other (ser versus estar). Such an assignment of two features, however, is either redundant or contradictory. What does it mean to say fue is simultaneously perfective and imperfective, while era has 'extra strength' imperfectivity?

Gili y Gaya (1961) looks at the problem in this way: 'La imperfección propia de los predicados con ser puede hallarse en conflicto con la perfección del tiempo [fue] y neutralizarse más o menos. Es decir, que en los tiempos imperfectos lo imperfectivo de ser se refuerza; en los perfectos, se debilita.' (p.63)[2] He is making two points here. First, when the features of grammatical and copulative aspect conflict, only the former remains operative. Second, when the features are the same, the aspectual value is reinforced.

The Real Academia (1973) says the same thing about both copulative aspects: 'El tiempo imperfecto o perfecto en que se emplee favorece o neutraliza total o parcialmente el valor semántico del verbo copulativo.' (p. 367)[3]

Thus these two authorities rightly predict that the difference between the sentences in each pair below is slight or null:

1.a. La reunión fue muy lucida.

1.b. La reunión estuvo muy lucida. (Gili y Gaya,p.63)

'The meeting was very successful.'

2.a. Esta señora fue elegante.

2.b. Esta señora estuvo elegante.

(Real Academia, p. 367)

'This lady was elegant.'

In (1-2), <u>fue</u> is as perfective as <u>estuvo</u> because the imperfective feature from <u>ser</u> has been suspended. If the analysis could stop here, then Chart 2 would supercede Chart 1:

Chart 2

Copula	Aspectual Features
era	-perfective (grammatical)
	-perfective (copulative)
estaba	-perfective (grammatical)
fue	+perfective (grammatical)
estuvo	+perfective (grammatical)
	+perfective (copulative)

Now only one feature is operative in estaba and fue. The grammatical aspect takes semantic precedence over the copulative aspect. As in the first chart, era and estuvo are assigned two features and thus are 'more strongly' imperfective or perfective. The chart correctly predicts that (a-b) in (1-2) are similar, because fue is simply perfective and estuvo is perfective as well, only more so.

Problems with Charts One and Two

The matter cannot stop with the examples above, because there are data like (3) where 'se siente plenamente la diferencia' ('one plainly sees the difference'). (Gili y Gaya, p. 63)

3.a. Era elegante.

3.b. Estaba elegante. (Gili y Gaya, p.63)

The presence of a difference is consistent with Chart One, because era is 'doubly' imperfective while estaba has a perfective element mixed in. And yet, as will be clear later, the difference between these two sentences are consistent with Chart Two as well.

Setting the data aside for now, neither chart can be completely right for a few a priori reasons. The first

creates a problem for the second chart: the interaction between the copulative and grammatical forms is inconsistent. If the grammatical aspect reigns supreme in estaba and fue, giving each one a single aspectual feature, then why doesn't this precedence not hold for the other two? Estuvo is not simply perfective nor is era just imperfective. Rather, in those forms, copulative and grammatical aspect are on equal terms. In other words, either two aspectual features are at play or just one. There is no mechanism at hand that would explain this inconsistent relationship between copulative and grammatical aspect.

The second pitfall applies to both charts. What does it mean to say estuvo is 'doubly' perfective and era 'doubly' imperfective? To my knowledge, 'strength' is not a defined term in aspectology. As it stands, it is too vague if not meaningless. How, for example, is

4.a. Aureliano era ciego.

'Aureliano was blind.'

~~4.b. Aureliano es ciego.~~

'more' imperfective than

4.b. Aureliano es ciego.

which is only imperfective once?

One might argue that both are equally imperfective because the Simple Present itself is imperfective: 'Son imperfectos todos los tiempos simples de la conjugación castellana, excepto el pretérito absoluto (canté).' (Gili y Gaya, p. 63, ft. 3) If this is true, then

5.a. Estuvo preocupada ayer.

'She was worried yesterday.'

is more perfective than

5.b. Está preocupada hoy.

'She is worried today.'

because está is in the Simple Present, being marked perfective once as the copula, and imperfective once as a simple tense.

The argument is rapidly becoming absurd, which is the point. To say the same feature can be assigned twice generates nonsense. Even if one ignores the issue of the aspect of the Simple Present, the problem remains that thus far there is no way to demonstrate that (4.a) is more aspectually powerful than (4.b.), or (5.a.) more so than (5.b.). To recapitulate, the first pitfall about the charts is the inconsistency of features; the second is the convoluted arguments which follow from the faulty concept of double features.

In the following section, a new formulation which will be free of these perplexities will appear. But first, a look at the consistency of the data vis-a-vis both charts will hint at what kind of remedy is needed.

As was shown above, each pair in (1-2) is synonymous and consistent with Chart Two.

1.a. La reunión fue muy lucida.

1.b. La reünión estuvo muy lucida.

2.a. Esta señora fue elegante.

2.b. Esta señora estuvo elegante.

Both copulas in each case are perfective. However, we are saddled with the same problem of defining how estuvo is a little more perfective than fue. ~~How so?~~ And yet, (1-2) are not out of line with the first chart either, which expresses that estuvo is strongly perfective while fue is weakened by the imperfective element mixed into it.

The close meanings in (1-2) contrast with the 'decidedly different meaning' (Gili y Gaya, see above) between the two sentences in (3).

3.a. Era elegante.

3.b. Estaba elegante.

According to Chart One, era is uncompromisingly imperfective while estaba has a perfective tinge. The difference in meaning is that in (a), the person who the speaker saw was elegant, and possibly always has been and always will be. But in (b), this person had not always been elegant; perhaps she dressed elegantly for a special occasion. Yet Chart Two could explain this difference too. Era is doubly imperfective, so there is no trace of beginning or end defined, but estaba is not so staunchly imperfective, and so there is room to assume the state of elegance had a definite beginning, which is a perfective trait.

When two or more charts, models,or theories can account for the same data, and account for disparate cases like (1-2) and (3), this indicates that the problem lies in vagueness rather than incorrectness. The issue is not so much that double and opposite features from the same class are meaningless concepts, but rather, a valid generalization is lying hidden beneath the formulations THAT Charts One and Two presuppose. It is now time to unveil some more precise formulations, which are preceded by two new charts below.

Two new formulations

Chart 3

Copula	Aspectual Features
era	-perfective (beginning and end undefined)
estaba	-perfective (beginning and end undefined)
fue	+perfective (beginning and/or end defined)
estuvo	+perfective (beginning and/or end defined)

Chart 4

Copula	Aspectual Features	
	Beginning defined	End defined
era	-	-
estaba	+	-
fue	-	+
estuvo	+	+

These charts express the following formulations:
A. If the choice between ser and estar is obligatory, or if they are synonymous in a given context, then only (virtually) the ~~verbal~~ grammatical aspect is operative. Era and so on are each assigned one grammatical aspectual feature as in Chart Three. Either the beginning and end are undefined in the imperfective, or at least one of those phases does get defined in the perfective. This description is identical to the conventional understanding of imperfective and perfective aspect in all verbs in Spanish. (e.g. Sole and Sole, 1977, pp. 58 and 61)
B. If the choice between ser and estar is neither obligatory nor synonymous, then era and so on will each be assigned two features from two classes-- ± beginning defined, and ± end defined.

Formulation A distinguishes between definition and non-definition of the phases beginning and end. Formulation B distinguishes among non-definition of phases, definition of at least one or the other, and definition of both.

Presentation of more data will show how these formulations work. When possible, the data consist of

samples from magazines and newspapers. This 'real life' data are useful for determining the semantic value of the copulas in a more extensive context. As for the potential objections to and theoretical implications of the new formulations, these are dealt with later.

4. Era un hombre metódico, pero extraño. Anotaba en un cuaderno todas las faltas de sus empleados. (Cambio 16,708:96)
   'He was a methodical man, but strange. He noted down in a notebook all of the faults of his employees.'
5. Las siete víctimas estaban en una casa móvil cuando el cable cayó alrededor de las 4.30 de la mañana... (Diario Las Americas, 26 March 1985, 1-B)
   'The seven victims were in a mobile home when the cable fell around 4:30 in the morning.'
6. Keynes fue un verdadero liberal desde el momento que se animó a salvar el sistema capitalista... (Vision,63 no. 1:35)
   'Keynes was a true liberal from the moment he was moved to save the capitalist system.'
7. Muchos intelectuales comunistas ... estuvieron a punto de abandonar el partido en más de una ocasión. (Revista de Occidente, 33:128)

'Many Communist intellectuals ... were at the point of abandoning the party on more than one occasion.'

All of the data above exemplify Chart Three. In (4), ser is obligatory because, as is usually the case, it precedes a noun. (Real Academia, p. 365) There is no suggestion that the man's methodical behavior began or ended at some defined point. It is an ongoing state, just as his noting down of faults is on ongoing event. If the man were alive today (the broader context shows he is not), one would have no reason to expect that he stopped being methodical. Thus (4) is consistent with Chart THREE (and with Chart Four since the features for era coincide).

Estar in (5) is obligatory because it is describing the location of a mobile entity. As Chart Three predicts, the beginning and end of being inside the mobile home are not indicated. There is no suggestion or implication that the victims initiated their occupancy at a certain time nor, of course, that they vacated it at some point. As with era, both beginning and end are unassumed. So estaban functions like any other verb marked Imperfective, such as quedaban.

'remained'.

Ser in (6) is obligatory for the same reason as it is in (4). Not only is (6) consistent with Chart Three, but proves the point admirably by directly contradicting Chart Four. As Chart Three predicts, fue is perfective in that the beginning of a state, being liberal, is defined. It begins 'desde el momento...' Chart Four, on the other hand, predicts that the end, not the beginning, of fue is defined. Thus (6) is an especially felicitous example because there are others which contain fue with the end defined and seem 'closer' to what Chart Four involves.

Estar in (7) is used in the idiomatic phrase 'a punto de' 'on the point of'. It is self-evident from the meaning of the idiom itself that the beginning of the abandonment is in focus here and is therefore perfective. Thus, (7) is consistent with Chart Three because the beginning is defined, and inconsistent with Chart Four because not both beginning and end are defined.

As claimed above, Chart Three also covers examples where changing the copula has little or no impact on

the meaning. Pair (1) served as an example:

1.a. La reunión fue muy lucida.

1.b. La reunión estuvo muy lucida.

Chart Three correctly predicts that fue and estuvo are more or less the same because each is assigned the same feature +perfective. Chart Four is not applicable because fue and estuvo differ in one feature.

Now let us turn to examples for Chart Four. We have already noted that (a-b) in (3) contrast:

3.a. Era elegante.

3.b. Estaba elegante.

Elegance can be a long term state, so (b) can mean that the person was not always so elegant, but came to be so in preparation for, say, a modeling career. Perhaps the pair in (3) but not (1) is distinctive because meetings are inherently events with set beginnings and ends, whereas elegance may or may not have set phases. Thus the nature of the state can play a role in making the ser/estar contrast operative.

Chart Four accounts for (3) by saying that the beginning and end are undefined in (a), but that the beginning is in (b). This is preferable to the earlier accounts in Charts One and Two. Era is not myster-

iously doubly imperfective; it simply assumes neither beginning nor end. Estaba is not schizophrenically both imperfective and perfective; rather, as a product of copulative and grammatical aspectual interaction, only the beginning is delimited. In a sense one could fancy that era is 'more' imperfective in that neither phase is defined, and that estaba is 'less' perfective than estuvo because only one and not both phases are defined. While the earlier charts One and Two do capture these perceptions of more and less, Charts Three and Four reveal the precise elements behind those intuitions.

The data in (8) were jointly created by a native speaker (nonlinguist) and me, starting out with 'El salón estaba lujosísimo.'(Real Academia, p.366)

8.a. El salón era lujosísimo. Tenía cortinas de terciopelo.
'The salon was very luxurious. It had velvet curtains.'

8.b. *El salón era lujosísimo hasta hoy.
'... until today.'

8.c. El salón estaba lujosísimo el mes pasado.
'... last month.'

8.d. *El salón ~~fue~~ ESTABA lujosísimo hasta ~~que la casa~~ HOY.

'... until today.

8.e. El salón fue lujosísimo hasta que la casa se cayó en un terremoto.

'... until the house fell down in an earthquake.'

8.f. El salón estuvo lujosísimo durante la boda.

'... during the wedding.'

In (8), fue and estuvo definitely indicate an end to the state of luxuriousness, but as Chart Four predicts, no beginning point is delimited for (e); just the end. Also as predicted, 'hasta hoy' which obviously defines the end in (b) and (d) is impossible with era and estaba.

The other data in (8) work out as expected too. 'Tenía cortinas de terciopelo' in (a) has no suggestion of the beginning or end of the luxurious state. Possibly the room always has been and always will be that way. In (c), 'el mes pasado' delimits the beginning of luxury but does not suggest any future reversion to a non-luxurious state. 'Hasta que la casa se cayó' in (e) clearly indicates only the end of the state, and 'durante la boda' in (f) delimits the luxuriousness to only the time of the wedding. The implication is that the room is not normally that way and was made festive

just for that special occasion.

Now that I have provided examples for formulations A and B, there are a number of practical and theoretical questions to settle. These concern the nature of the data gathered, the preponderance of data for Formulation A, (CHART THREE) the role of syntactic and semantic constraints in copula selection, justification for Formulation B, and justification for asserting that ser and estar are aspectual in the first place. The remaining two sections take up all of these questions.

Implications of the findings

The first matter to address is the preponderance of data for Chart Three. Examples like (4-7) were easy to encounter in a random reading of magazines and newspapers. However, examples where the choice of copula was nonobligatory ~~and also not synonymous~~ were difficult to find. Examples (1) and (8) had to come from citations in other research or be created and verified by native speakers. Hauenschild (1982) confronted the same dilemma of not always being able to obtain natural data, and resolved it in the same way: get natural data when practical; otherwise go ahead with created data. (p.184)

Besides there being a preponderance of data for Chart Three, there seemed to be far more instances of ser in the magazines used for data. Lopez de Richards (1980-81) objectively backs up this impression with her quantitative study of the copulas in a taped data collection. Of the 3353 instances of ser and estar, 'los casos con ser representan "grosso modo" el 75% del total'. (p. 845) Moreover, in the same corpus, over thirty five examples with ser were elliptical-- e.g., ' [Es] una ciudad muy limpia' '[It's] a very clean city' (p.824)-- but no examples with estar were.

This information suggests that ser is semantically unmarked. Estar is marked in that it makes a more specific claim about states in the past. It marks boundaries, either beginnings, ends, or both. Estar assumes more knowledge of past states. Ser does not define either boundary but does not negate the possibility of them. There may or may not be such boundaries. In other words, a delimited state cannot imply the absence of delimitations, but an undelimited state could potentially be perceived as delimited once more knowledge came to light. For example, if I had always thought of my friend Fred as thin, and

then he had become fat, then my experience of his obesity has a defined beginning: Fred está obeso. But if I had met Fred sometime after this change, I could assume he had always been that way and say Fred es obeso. Suppose in the latter case, Fred's devoted friend Denise fed me the knowledge that he had just become fat for the first time. Then I could revise my statement to Está obeso. Notice that when I had the knowledge in the first place, I could not 'lose' it and revert to Es obeso.(See Luján for the same concept expressed in terms of ser implying estar but not vice versa, pp.177-180) Thus, by the way, ser can be unmarked yet not atemporal, as the Soles would have it.(1977, pp. 253-54)

When ser is used because it is unmarked, it is selected, so to speak, before grammatical aspect has had its say. Viewing the unmarked status of ser as akin to whatever other principles force a choice of copula, we understand Formulation A as doing half the job once the obligatory principle has done the other half. Before, after, or simultaneously, Formulation A is left to assign one of two choices instead of four. In contrast, under Formulation B, the copulative and grammatical aspect interact with each other rather than

remain independent.

Aside from markedness, there are other semantic constraints at work. For example, it seems to be no accident that the idiom a punto de 'on the point of' requires estar. It is inherently perfective since it spells out one of the definitions of this aspect: binding the beginning of an event or state. Thus the nature of the situation itself can independently select the copula. It is as if once copulative aspect is decided, the copula behaves just like any other verb and takes on imperfective or perfective grammatical aspect in the same way.

Syntactic constraints affect copula choice as well. Consider that 'Al que vimos fue a Juan' 'Who we saw was John' is okay, but not 'Al que vimos *es/*era/*sera a Juan'. (Cabrera, 1982, p. 240) Cabrera assumes the correct sentence is equivalent to 'Vimos a Juan' 'We saw John'. (p.238) Then a copying rule insures that the aspect of vimos will be repeated in the copula. (See Cabrera for details.)

Then there are the cases which are not so clearly syntactic or semantic. Do nouns preceded by a copula

usually require ser because they prototypically represent more enduring entities than say, adjectives? *'Estás una mujer' 'You are a woman' is strange because it implies the woman was once not a woman. It could only work in the rare context of a man getting a sex change operation, after which the doctor proudly announces, '¡Ahora estás una mujer!'

Whether the obligatory constraints are syntactic, semantic, or a combination, they operate in so many contexts that Formulation B has little chance to apply. These constraints automatically make the alternative copula odd or impossible.

In addition to the obligatory cases, Formulation A covers cases like (1-2), where copulative choice 'makes little difference'. Again, the inherent nature of some states can come into play. In a case like,

9.a. El paciente estaba loco.

9.b. El paciente era loco.

'The patient was crazy.'

it makes a big difference whether the state is viewed as temporary or characteristic of the patient. On the other hand, definition or nondefinition of beginnings and ends may not affect one's understanding or per-

ception of other states. Whether or not the meeting in (1) is explicitly referred to as having a defined beginning (estuvo) as well as a defined end has little impact on the fact that it did transpire and was successful.

Unlike the obligatory contexts, data like (1-2) are compatible, not contradictory to, Formulation B. One cannot apply B even vacuously to obligatory data; it is simply not true that the beginning is undefined in (6), or that estaban in (5) has an assumed beginning.

5. Las siete víctimas estaban en una casa móvil...
6. Keynes fue un verdadero liberal desde el momento...

One can apply Formulation B, even if it has no effect, to the synonymous data. However, it is not accurate to term the application as vacuous, because it is not as if the four-way distinction were already operative and Formulation B were redundant. B does not 'take', and the apparent reason has to do with the perception of states and what temporal detail is relevant in a given context. Therefore, since these examples behave as if only grammatical aspect had influence, they are grouped under Formulation A. Further justification is found in the concluding section.

Since Formulation A covers so much of the data, and B so little (but which may turn out to ~~be~~ cover more in a different corpus of data), why posit B at all? This is the crucial question. The most straightforward reason is that it accounts for data such as (3) and (8). This looks uninteresting in that such data are artificially created and apparently infrequent. Native speakers did reject most of my created four-way contrasts as wrong or improbable, presumably because they violated one or more syntactic or semantic constraints. But the fact that the knowledge expressed in B comes to light at all is certainly of interest for linguistic theory.

The key to understanding the role of Formulation B is to relate it to Formulation A. A suspends, neutralizes, the full underlying system represented in B. That the whole system exists is not vitiated by its neutralization in many environments. Rather, the semantic and syntactic constraints (and pragmatic, if you will) make sense in relation to the total system. A constraint imposes limits, so there must be something that the limit is being imposed on. This is to say, the constraints are understood in relation to what their absence would entail. My hypothesis is that if the

grammar were stripped of these constraints, the complete system would operate in more contexts. The last section, which comes next, takes up the issue of abstractness which this analysis raises.

Concluding discussion

Some researchers agree that ser and estar exhibit the same aspectual distinction as the grammatical aspectual forms in the past. Ser is to estar as hablaba is to habló. By adding the complicating factor of interaction between copulative and grammatical aspect, I have put the proposal of copulative aspect to the final test, pushing the analysis to its logically furthermost extension. If the results had been contradictory, then doubt would have fallen on the existence of aspect in the copulas in the first place.

At first, as in Chart One, pushing the analysis to the 'edge' of the grammar did seem to generate riddles of double aspect and contradictory features. One could have concluded that if ser and estar are aspectual at all, it must be of a kind different from imperfective and perfective. Discussion of the data with the new formulations A and B have removed

the riddles. Either copulative and grammatical aspect operate independently as in obligatory environments, interact but to no effect in synonymous environments, or interact to produce a more fine-grained aspectual distinction in nonobligatory contrastive environments.

As pointed out above, the synonymous examples seem compatible with both A and B, but are grouped with A. Although the four-way distinction is not semantically ruled out, they are not ruled in either. Such data behave as if only grammatical aspect ~~is~~ WERE involved, so they are like the obligatory data. (Logically, only the copulative aspect could have been in force, but even then, it would not be interacting with grammatical aspect as described by B.) In practice, such data act as if a constraint against activating B were placed on them as well as on the obligatory data.

This favoring of Formulation A for the bulk of the data has a pedagogical application. Since B is not crucial on a purely practical plane, one could teach language learners just Formulation A: Once ser or estar is selected, treat it as any other verb to assign it either imperfective or perfective aspect. For most learners, the effort of internalizing

Formulation B is not worth the subtle communicative gain.

This advice suggests that B is important to theory, not application. What is of theoretical concern is the abstractness of the analysis. As in some phonological analyses, contrasts have been posited even though they are neutralized in most environments, or even in all environments. To take another analogy, the abstractness of B in relation to the semantic and syntactic constraints is like the relation between the syntactic rule, 'Move ⊥', which rarely results in a grammatical surface structure by itself, and the various constraints and filters which intercede to produce different but grammatical structures. Similarly, the semantic and syntactic constraints prevent Formulation B from applying freely. Given this reasoning, B applies when not blocked by A to produce data like (8).

Although details of this analysis may prove inaccurate, it has shown despite this further test of the validity of copulative aspect, the distinction not only remains intact, but continues to be a productive source of valuable explanations.

Footnotes

[1]Beware of a serious proofreading error in that article. (a) and (b) on p.418 should read as 'implies' and not 'does not apply'.

[2]'The imperfectivity itself of the predicates with ser can find itself in conflict with the perfectivity of the Preterite [fue] and more or less be neutralized. That is to say, in the Imperfective tenses the imperfectivity of ser is reinforced; in the Preterite, it is weakened.' This and all other translations in this paper are mine.

[3]'The imperfective or perfective aspect being employed favors or totally (or partly) neutralizes the semantic value of the copulative verb.'

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